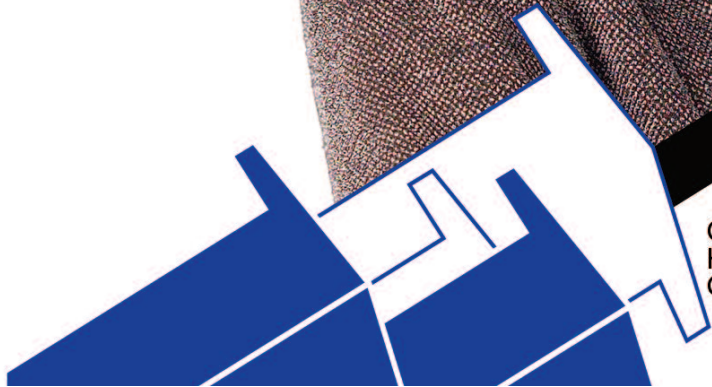


10 North Senate Avenue  
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2277

**[www.IN.gov/dwd](http://www.IN.gov/dwd)**

**WorkOne**

The Art & Science of Finding a Job



MAKE YOUR MOVE™

Connecting People.  
Helping Hoosiers  
Get Better Jobs.

# Job Search Checklist

## Identify potential occupations.

- \_\_\_ Make a skills inventory.
- \_\_\_ Identify your interests.
- \_\_\_ Identify jobs that use your skills and interests.

## Identify potential employers.

- \_\_\_ Ask family, friends, etc. to help you.
- \_\_\_ Go to your nearest Indiana WorkOne Center for information on companies and jobs.
- \_\_\_ Use other resources (library, newspapers, on-line data, etc.).
- \_\_\_ Obtain job announcements and listings.

## Prepare materials.

- \_\_\_ Write resumes to fit the jobs for which you wish to apply.
- \_\_\_ Write cover letters or letters of application to specific employers.
- \_\_\_ Make a list of names and addresses of people who would be willing to be a reference for you.

## Plan your time.

- \_\_\_ Treat your search like a job.
- \_\_\_ Wake early every workday during your search.
- \_\_\_ Make a "to do" list every day.
- \_\_\_ Keep a log of your activities.
- \_\_\_ Reward yourself for a good day's work.

## Contact employers.

- \_\_\_ Call employers directly.
- \_\_\_ Go to companies for applications.
- \_\_\_ Contact friends and relatives.
- \_\_\_ Write down names, numbers, addresses and any other advice or information.

## Prepare for interviews.

- \_\_\_ Learn about the company.
- \_\_\_ Review the job description carefully so that you are able to explain how you are qualified.
- \_\_\_ Neatly assemble resumes, applications, letters, references, etc.
- \_\_\_ Allow yourself extra travel time.

## Go to interviews.

- \_\_\_ Dress appropriately for the interview.
- \_\_\_ Be on time.
- \_\_\_ Go alone.
- \_\_\_ Be clean, concise, honest and positive.
- \_\_\_ Thank the interviewer.

## Follow-up interviews.

- \_\_\_ Send a thank you note to the interviewer.
- \_\_\_ Think of how you can do better the next time you are interviewed.

## Accept the job.

- \_\_\_ Understand the job duties, hours, salary, benefits, etc.
- \_\_\_ Be flexible when discussing salary, but don't sell yourself short.
- \_\_\_ GOOD LUCK in your new job!

*Don't forget to...*

## Seek additional training to prepare for future jobs.

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## Welcome to Your Future

Looking for a job? You've come to the right place. This brochure offers some time-tested methods for seeking and finding jobs. You'll find steps you can take that may help your chances.

With regular visits to your local Indiana WorkOne Center, plus persistence and patience, you can be on your way to a new job.

So sit down and read. Then get up and go to work!

## Characteristics that employers seek

Here are some of the characteristics or "soft skills" that employers seek in those they hire and keep.\*

How many of these qualities are true about you?

- ☐ **Accurate**  
*(makes almost no errors; careful)*
- ☐ **Dependable**  
*(can be counted on; finishes work)*
- ☐ **Friendly**  
*(likes people and shows it)*
- ☐ **Honest**  
*(doesn't cheat, lie, steal; can be trusted)*
- ☐ **Polite**  
*(respects others; uses good manners)*
- ☐ **Responsible**  
*(does what they say they will do)*
- ☐ **Caring**  
*(listens to people; gentle)*
- ☐ **Enthusiastic**  
*(pleasant, energetic, happy)*
- ☐ **Hard Worker**  
*(strong work ethic; concentrates)*
- ☐ **Organized**  
*(does things in an orderly way)*
- ☐ **Practical**  
*(uses common sense; knows how things work)*
- ☐ **Team Player**  
*(works well with others in groups)*

\* From Junior Achievement of northeastern Indiana and JobWorks of northeastern Indiana.

## One Step At A Time

Your job is to find a job. But like any work you do, you have to take it one step at a time. The steps you may want to follow are:



## Assess your skills

Take a Skills Inventory by making a list of your strengths and experience. It will help you form a resume – which will be discussed later.

It will also help you with your confidence. Memorize it – so you can talk freely about your past accomplishments in an interview. Tack it on a wall. It's more impressive than you expected, right? You do have a lot of skills and qualifications to offer an employer! This list will help you focus on certain jobs where your skills can be best used.

## Skills Inventory Worksheet

What job experience do you have?

---

---

---

What special skills do you have?

---

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What are your personal strengths?

(Ask three friends or family members to truthfully list your best characteristics.)

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Any volunteer work?

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---

---

Military experience?

---

---

---

Education/Degrees (When and From Where):

GED \_\_\_\_\_

High school \_\_\_\_\_

After high school \_\_\_\_\_

College \_\_\_\_\_

Outstanding subjects \_\_\_\_\_

Honors \_\_\_\_\_

Activities in school \_\_\_\_\_

## Start the Search

**“The average length of time a person is idle between jobs is 17 weeks. The trained job seeker is successful in 5 to 5.5 weeks.”**

— *Richard Lathrop, “Who’s Hiring Who”*

Whether you’re out of work or looking for a new and better job, it’s a process that takes time, energy, attention to detail and follow-through; the same steps that it takes to be a good employee.

A job search must be treated like a full-time job. Some experts suggest spending between 25 to 40 hours a week looking for a job. And why not? You would work those kind of hours for someone else.

It can be frustrating – searching for a job often requires dozens of letters and phone calls, with very few replies. Keep in mind that your task is to “sell” a product – yourself – to an employer. So be patient, and don’t give up!

Top salespersons will tell you that statistically, it can easily take 10

requests to get 1 opportunity to present your product, and 10 presentations to sell 1. Of course, not being selected is disappointing, but your first goal is to get an interview. Each time you make a call or send a letter, it gets easier. You are one call or one letter closer to getting hired.

**Top salespersons will tell you that statistically, it can easily take 10 requests to get 1 opportunity to present your product, and 10 presentations to sell 1.**

## Apply Your Strengths

Take a look back at your Skills Inventory. It lists some strengths that will help your job search. Are there strengths you have forgotten? Are you good with people? Are you a quiet worker? How are you at keeping track of expenses? How about machines? Do you like math? What are your best academic subjects? Do you know a second language? Do you have computer skills? Are you artistic?

Now’s the time to apply your strengths to the marketplace in order to identify the jobs that best fit your strengths. Your previous jobs have given you contacts and experience, but knowing your strengths will help you answer every employer’s ultimate question: “Why should I hire you?”

It may also be a good time to look for that “ideal” job. What do you really want to do? Isn’t it time for you to find out what it would take to do the job instead of just wishing for it? The Information Resource Area of your nearest WorkOne Center has information on a wide variety of careers.

It’s always easier to do your best when you enjoy your work. You – and your future boss – will both be happier.

## Jobs are Easier to Find When You Have a Job

If you are out of a job, or looking for your first job, consider the strategy of taking the first decent job in your occupation area that comes your way. Rather than waiting for the “perfect” job, you may get an entry-level offer. This can provide new contacts plus give you a chance to show your abilities in action. Just having a job gives you more self-confidence, and the paycheck doesn’t hurt either.

On the other hand, keep your career goals in mind. Few employers will be impressed by a job seeker who says he or she will do “anything.” Making such a statement gives the impression that you have little direction or focus to your career. It also discounts the job skills you do possess.

# Career Choices Worksheet

Check the areas where you have experience or positions that interest you.

## Executive, Administrative and Managerial Occupations

- ☐ Construction contractors and managers
- ☐ Health service managers
- ☐ Management analysts and consultants
- ☐ Restaurant food service managers

## Professional Specialty Occupations

- ☐ Computer scientists and system analysts
- ☐ Operations research analysts
- ☐ Psychologists & counselors
- ☐ Human service workers
- ☐ School teachers
- ☐ Occupational therapists
- ☐ Registered nurses
- ☐ Respiratory therapists
- ☐ Speech language pathologists
- ☐ Audiologists
- ☐ Video producers

## Technicians and Related Support Occupations

- ☐ Dental hygienists
- ☐ EEG technicians
- ☐ Medical records technicians
- ☐ Nuclear medicine technologists
- ☐ Radiological technologists
- ☐ Paralegals
- ☐ Pharmacy assistants

## Marketing and Sales Occupations

- ☐ Cashiers
- ☐ Counter & retail clerks
- ☐ Financial services representatives
- ☐ Insurance agents
- ☐ Real estate agents
- ☐ Retail salespersons

- ☐ Sales representatives
- ☐ Service sales representatives
- ☐ Telemarketers
- ☐ Travel agents

## Administrative Support Occupations

- ☐ Adjusters, investigators and collectors
- ☐ Bank tellers
- ☐ Clerical managers
- ☐ General office clerks
- ☐ Secretaries
- ☐ Systems trainers
- ☐ Teacher's aides

## Service Occupations

- ☐ Chefs and cooks
- ☐ Child care workers
- ☐ Corrections officers
- ☐ Flight attendants
- ☐ Food and beverage service workers
- ☐ Groundskeepers and gardeners
- ☐ Guards
- ☐ In-home health aides
- ☐ Janitors and cleaners
- ☐ Lodging managers
- ☐ Medical assistants
- ☐ Medical secretaries
- ☐ Nursing aides and psychiatric aides
- ☐ Preschool workers

## Mechanics, Installers and Repairers

- ☐ General maintenance mechanics
- ☐ Computer equipment repairers
- ☐ Copier repair persons

## Transportation

- ☐ Routing clerks
- ☐ Truck drivers



## Identify Potential Employers

Once you have an idea of the career you seek, you can start to create a list of potential employers.

Even if you already have a company in mind, look around. You may be surprised to find companies you didn't know about that are similar. The first thing you can do is look in the phone book under the business category. That will give you an idea of local employers.

Two other public facilities will help you fill out your list. Your nearest WorkOne Center and the public library will offer additional directories and listings of employers. Try to collect not only the company name, address and phone numbers, but also the names, addresses and phone numbers of contact personnel (managers, human resources staff, etc.).

## The “Hidden” Job Market

There are jobs available that are never advertised. Sometimes an employer expects to fill it “internally.” Maybe it's not a high priority, or it requires unusual qualifications. There are even times when there is no position, and you can create a job with a bold letter or phone call that exactly matches the employer's needs. Welcome to the hidden job market – follow these steps:

**START** at the top. Call or write the president or CEO. This can sometimes lead you to a referral or contact – even an interview.

**LEARN** how to network. For example, it never hurts to make friends with the secretary or receptionist. These are the “gatekeepers” who can keep people out – or let people in!

**BE DIRECT.** As amazing as it sounds, some people just walk into a company and ask for a job! This is one of the most successful methods used by job seekers. No one gets hired if they don't ever say they're available.

**RESPECT** their time. Remember, these people are very busy and you typically have only 6 to 10 seconds to make a good first impression. Tell them how you think you can be an asset to them. Talk about your experience and skills. (Don't forget your positive attitude!)

**BE PREPARED.** You may not get an interview on your first visit. But what if you do? Always look your best. Always carry a resume with you. If you are given an appointment, make your presentation short and to the point. Smile! If there is an opening, go for it. This may be your big chance.

**BUILD YOUR LIST.** If you are told there are no openings, ask if they know of openings anywhere else. Don't leave empty handed.

## Resources are at Your Fingertips

For a good starting place in your electronic search, log on to the Indiana Department of Workforce Development's home page at [www.workforce.IN.gov](http://www.workforce.IN.gov)

“Job leads” are information about who is hiring and whom to call for a job. Investigate every channel for job leads. Here's where creativity can go to work.

Remember, the more doors you open, the better your chances will be.

- Tell your friends and relatives. Believe it or not, those contacts result in more job placements every year than any other approach – up to 60 percent of all jobs are found through personal contacts.
- Register with CS3 (Customer Self-Service System) at your local WorkOne Center or at any computer. Log on to [www.workforce.IN.gov](http://www.workforce.IN.gov). Employers regularly list openings. Job counselors and up-to-the-minute labor market information are also available at all WorkOne Centers.
- Read all the classifieds, because some job openings may not always be under the most obvious title. Try to answer ads only from companies willing to list their name. Be careful, there are scams out there. A good rule of thumb is to be wary of “job offers” that require you to pay them. Remember: You're looking for a job, not an “investment opportunity.”
- Search the classifieds on-line. Many jobs can now be found on the Internet. (If you don't have a home computer, visit the nearest public or school library for information on public on-line access locations for on-line data searches.) For a good starting place in your electronic search, log on to the Indiana Department of Workforce Development's home page at [www.workforce.IN.gov](http://www.workforce.IN.gov).
- Another resource is the Customer Self-Service System (CS3). For up-to-the-minute job information from throughout the country, log on to [www.workforce.IN.gov](http://www.workforce.IN.gov) and click on jobseekers/job listings.
- Read your newspaper's business section. Why? Because stories about new businesses and company expansions may mean new job opportunities. Promotions may mean an opening in the person's old job.
- Sign up with a temporary employment service. Not only can the pay help cover job search expenses, the work will build your experience, give you new contacts and help you build some “momentum” toward a full-time job.

**“Eighty-five percent of available jobs are never advertised, posted or otherwise made available to the general public.”**

— J. Michael Farr, JIST Works, Inc., Indianapolis, IN

## Do It Yourself

You can use a professional resume writer, but working on it yourself makes you more familiar with your skills and experiences. It also better prepares you for an interview.

If you need help, visit your nearest Indiana WorkOne Center. The professionals there can help you assess your career strengths and advise you on preparing a resume. For free!

## Pick a Format

The next step is to organize your information into a format. The format you select depends on your amount of experience. Keep your sentences short and to the point. Type your resume. Limit it to one page.

Do not include personal information such as age, height and marital status. This information is not related to your job skills and distracts the reader from your strong selling points. If any of this information is critical to the job, it will come out in the interview.

**Some WorkOne Centers offer workshops on how to write a resume. The Information Resource Areas provide personal computers for job seekers to use.**

## The Resume

A resume, which is your personal “fact sheet,” is the only piece of information most job applicants will leave with a prospective employer. It is the main tool employers use to compare you with others. For that reason alone, give great attention to making your resume the best it can be.

Start with the Skills Inventory you wrote back on Page 3. Did you forget anything? Are those all the specific things you have accomplished in previous jobs? Any other special skills? Now's the time to make note of all successes, awards or accomplishments you may have received.

Now, circle all the skills and accomplishments that directly relate to your current job objective. The best of these will be the foundation on which you build your resume. Don't forget to include military service, volunteer work, hobbies and education.

Make the resume a positive statement of your achievements. Use words that show action (achieved, budgeted, planned, managed, led, etc.) Take credit for things you have done or can do, but be sure not to oversell yourself in areas of limited experience.

## 9 Rules for Resumes

1. Neatness counts. It must be typed (or printed on a letter-quality computer printer). Use 8-1/2 by 11-inch bond paper. Don't send out a resume that is smudged, crumpled, or hard to read.
2. Don't list salary or wage information.
3. Center or justify all headings.
4. PROOFREAD.  
Have someone else proofread it also.
5. Be positive. Identify your accomplishments.
6. Be specific. Use short, descriptive sentences.
7. Use action verbs to say what you have done like “developed” or “produced.”
8. Don't use abbreviations.
9. Try to include interesting facts about yourself.

Robert J. Lee  
139 Excaliber Lane.  
Hometown, IN 46003  
(219) 888-0000

OBJECTIVE: Entry level position with a daily newspaper.

QUALIFICATIONS: Worked on high school newspaper and yearbook staff three years. Received scholastic award for creative writing.  
Finished English and Journalism classes with high grades.

EXPERIENCE:

- Wrote various feature stories for newspaper. Created new format design which was cited for creative excellence at scholastic journalism conference. Gained valuable experience as chief photographer for yearbook as well as being recognized as top advertising salesman.
- Conducted extensive research and completed a detailed series of articles on historic significance of Native American culture in our state. This work not only earned distinguished merit award among high school journalists in the state, but was also reprinted in the local daily newspaper.
- Recorded legal descriptions and estate settlement records part-time for a local attorney's office.

WORK HISTORY: 1990- full-time student, Hometown High School  
Summer 1989 and 1990 - researcher,  
Whig & Whig Attorneys

EDUCATION & TRAINING: Senior - Hometown High School  
Journalism and business courses: photography, word processing, economics. President of Journalism Club.

## THE FUNCTIONAL RESUME

*(Arranged by work experience)*

This type of resume format works well for people with limited experience, who have been out of the workforce for a while, or who seek to change careers. It focuses more on your skills than on your employment history. It concentrates on quality of experience more than quantity of time.

## SIMPLE CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME

*(Arranged by time)*

This is the style of resume most people are familiar with – including employers, who see hundreds of them every year. Nevertheless, a well thought-out version will still accomplish the goal of showing an employer your progression in skills and experience.

Even in this format, specific dates (for example: March 1, 1982 to July 14, 1990) are not as important as accurately describing your duties and accomplishments during your years in each job.

Jack Smith  
1111 S. North St.  
Sometown, IN 47000

(317) 555-0101 (home)  
(317) 555-1100 (fax)  
jacksmith@online.com

### JOB OBJECTIVE

Desire a position in office management, personnel services or labor relations.  
Prefer a position requiring multiple responsibilities and a variety of tasks.

### EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Ace Business College, Chicago, IL - Graduate of a two-year management training program with emphasis on labor management studies.

Benjamin Franklin High School, Windfall, IN - General studies diploma with emphasis on business related studies.

U.S. Army - Inventory and supply control.

Other — Continuing education classes and workshops in business communications, customer relations and marketing.

### EXPERIENCE

1987 to present - Returned to college to continue education and complete degree work. Learned to operate word processing and data entry equipment.

1980-1987 - Shift supervisor, Whatnot Manufacturing, Windfall, IN.  
Managed a production staff of six people and maintained inventory records of shift production.

1978 to 1980 - U.S. Army in Europe. Assigned to various stations within supply.

Previous jobs - Various part-time jobs during High School.

### PERSONAL

I am considered reliable, hard-working and good with people.

## Don't Forget...

- Identify and clearly describe your experience. You will make the employer take notice of what you have to offer.
- Don't exaggerate or fabricate your abilities.
- Choose the right words and write the resume specifically for the job you seek. It may take more time, but it's worth it.
- Don't wait until you're unemployed to start writing a resume. Keep one on file and keep it current. Make notes about what you do at work and practice describing those duties on paper. It's less time consuming to keep the resume current. And it's much easier to record your job skills when you are employed and in a positive frame of mind about yourself and your abilities.

## Resume or Job Card?

An alternative to the resume is the "job card." As the name suggests, it is simply a typed index card with a summary of your qualifications. It is easy to write and a quick reference for someone reviewing your skills.

Make sure to list your full name, correct address and telephone number. Briefly list your skills experience and job goals.

Give one to every person you approach about a job, including friends and relatives. This gives them quick and easy answers to questions a job contact may have.

## The Cover Letter

Along with the resume, you should always send a cover letter or letter of application. It should be neat, brief, brimming with confidence – and it should specifically address the job for which you apply.

The letter is your best chance to clearly and briefly state why you should be chosen for the job. Explain how the skills you have most closely match the job's requirements. (It's a good idea to have the job description or classified ad in front of you as you write the letter.)

Begin the letter by stating your interest in the position. Then briefly explain why you are uniquely qualified. Write confidently about your previous experience. Tell exactly how you have been successful at what you have done in the past – ways you helped increase production, or other specific things you did to help the company. What were the objectives? Was this success measured?

Close your letter by asking if you may call to schedule an interview.

Make sure the letter and resume together present a positive and powerful picture of who you are. The person reading it just may want to hire you.

Jack B. Smith

1110 S. North St.  
Sometown, IN 47000

(317) 555-0101 (home)  
(317) 555-1100 (fax)

Education: Ace Business College, Chicago, IL.  
Major: Business Management (honors degree)  
Minor: Business Communications

Experience: 1978 to 1980 - Assigned to various duties with United States Army in Europe. Supervised supply records section and conducted post-community relations duties. Initiated a liaison position responsible for maintaining positive relations with community leaders of a town near the base.

1980 to 1987 - Joined Whatnot Manufacturing, Windfall, IN as a general laborer. Revised existing layout system for production line schedule which increased productivity by 15 percent. Was promoted to shift supervisor after 20 months of employment.

1987 to present - In addition to continuing work duties, returned to college and completed degree in computer science. Acquired knowledge in Macintosh computer use. Developed several new programs utilized in the workplace.

Other Facts: Experienced public speaking with ability to address large groups of people and get across highly technical information.

## THE IMPROVED CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME.

*(Arranged by time plus  
description)*

Look at the difference between the previous chronological resume and this one. They both have the same information, but this chronological resume is much more descriptive, personal, and exciting. Which person would you most likely call for an interview?

What you may take for granted or think an unimportant task may be very important to someone else. The simple chronological resume glosses over this person's military career and accomplishments. In the improved format, it takes advantage of it.

## THE COVER LETTER

Here is an example of a cover letter that you can use by changing the underlined sections to tell about your own successes.

**Pat Person**  
**1000 Somewhere Court**  
**Anytown, IN 47000**  
**(317) 555-0000**

J. Robert Beams  
Production Manager  
Jones Electronic Widget Design & Manufacturing, Inc.  
4000 Manufacturer's Way  
Near City, IN 47000

March 1, (Year)

Dear Mr. Beams:

I believe my solid experience as the manager of a 12-person production team that increased output by 32 percent under my leadership makes me an ideal candidate for Shift Supervisor in Jones Widgets Near City plant.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss with you exactly how my experience could help Jones Widget successfully meet its need for production growth as your new Shift Supervisor.

May I call you during the week of the 19th to set up a time when we can meet? Or if you wish, I would welcome a call at home at (317) 555-0000 to set up a time at your convenience.

Sincerely,



Pat Person  
Clean Room Manager  
Smith Optic Circuitry Lab

Enclosure

# How to Make the Approach

You now have a resume in hand and a cover letter in mind, but those are just tools to use to reach your real goal – a successful interview with the person who does the hiring where you want to work.

More research comes next. Now that you've got your job lead, you need to know as much as possible about the company looking for someone. Do this for two reasons: To be sure you are the employee for them, and to be sure they are the employer for you.

This calls for another trip to the public library, WorkOne Center, Chamber of Commerce, etc. Write down all you can about:

- The company – its ownership, its managers, its employees, its history, its philosophy, its successes, etc.
- The products – What exactly does this company produce? What are they best known for? How much does it cost? How is it sold? Where/how is this product available? Who uses it?
- The industry – What's the future of this industry? Where does this company rank overall in size and sales? Who is the competition?

# Networking is How You Open Doors

Remember in "The Hidden Job Market," on Page 6 when we mentioned "networking"? Here's where you put it to work.

Networking helps your job search by connecting you with people who can give you information you need. Perhaps a contact knows the industry you are researching and can give you up-to-the minute insights. A contact may also help by giving you a name and a reference.

# A Note or Two About Applications

Filling out a job application is often required by larger employers, but it is surprising how often it's not the first step for persons who actually get hired.

Most applications ask for your address, phone numbers, previous employment and salary information. Your resume and Reference Worksheets can make filling out most applications much easier.

**The better you know the company, the more you'll have in common with your interviewer.**

# References

It is common for companies to ask candidates for jobs to provide references, names and phone numbers of persons who can tell them more about you. Be prepared by making as many copies of the following worksheet as you wish and filling one out for each possible reference.

## References Worksheet

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Title\_\_\_\_\_

Work Address\_\_\_\_\_

City\_\_\_\_\_ State\_\_\_\_\_

Zip\_\_\_\_\_

Phone\_\_\_\_\_

FAX\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail\_\_\_\_\_

How they know you:

Personal\_\_\_\_\_

Professional\_\_\_\_\_

How they know your abilities:

\_\_\_\_\_

They gave permission to be a reference for me on  
(date)\_\_\_\_\_

# Networking Directory

Copy and fill out as you make contacts.

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Title\_\_\_\_\_

Work Address\_\_\_\_\_

City\_\_\_\_\_State\_\_\_\_\_Zip\_\_\_\_\_

Phone\_\_\_\_\_FAX\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail\_\_\_\_\_

Home Address\_\_\_\_\_

City\_\_\_\_\_State\_\_\_\_\_Zip\_\_\_\_\_

Phone\_\_\_\_\_FAX\_\_\_\_\_

Contact type (check all that apply):    ☐ Personal                      ☐ Professional

When & how we met each other (date, place, situation):

---

---

---

---

What we have worked on together:

---

---

---

---

Mutual interests:

---

---

---

Other important information:

---

---

---



## Present Your Strengths

The following is a list of questions often asked in interviews. Study them carefully and consider how to answer them in the way that best communicates your strong points. Identify the questions that raise your greatest fear. Then practice answering them again. Try to understand why these questions will be asked.

### SAMPLE QUESTIONS:

- \_\_\_ How did you learn about this job?
- \_\_\_ Why are you interested in this job?
- \_\_\_ Have you ever worked as a (job title) before?
- \_\_\_ Tell me about your education.
- \_\_\_ What subjects in school did you enjoy most?
- \_\_\_ What subjects in school did you enjoy least?
- \_\_\_ Tell me briefly about your past jobs.
- \_\_\_ Which did you enjoy most and why?
- \_\_\_ Why did you leave your last job?
- \_\_\_ Have you ever been fired or asked to resign? Why?

The next set of questions is more difficult because they are open-ended and subjective. However, they can be your golden opportunity.

### GOLDEN OPPORTUNITIES:

- \_\_\_ Tell me a little about yourself.
- \_\_\_ Describe your personality. What kind of person are you?
- \_\_\_ What are your most valuable skills or assets?
- \_\_\_ What is your most serious fault?
- \_\_\_ What type of experience do you have that makes you most qualified for the job?
- \_\_\_ Why should I hire you?

## The Secret to Impressing an Interviewer

It's not as hard as you might think. Ask interested, sincere questions. This is where your research into the company comes into action. The more you know about the company, the better questions you can ask.

- \_\_\_ What job qualifications do you consider most important?
- \_\_\_ What would a typical first assignment be?
- \_\_\_ How long has my predecessor held this position?
- \_\_\_ What type of training will I receive?
- \_\_\_ Could you tell me more about the duties of this position?

## Know What the Boss Wants

An employer is usually listening for answers to three ultimate – but usually unasked – questions:

1. Can you do the job?
2. How can you help the company be successful?
3. How can you make life easier for your boss?

If he or she thinks you offer the best solution to these ultimate concerns, the job will be yours. But to do that, you must be prepared and stay focused on your goal.

Linking your past experience to the needs of the employer is the key. You do it by identifying, describing and then proving your skills. The interviewer is not going to pry this information out of you. You have to do it and do it clearly, completely and to the point.

## Questions You Don't Have to Answer

Based on the federal laws designed to minimize employment discrimination practices, there are a few questions that are off-limits for discussion during job interviews.

The best way to handle these questions is to ask how the question relates to the specific position they are seeking to fill.

Some examples of “off-limits” topics include anything relating to:

- race, religion, politics and marital status
- age, unless it is related to the job
- non-work-related disability
- any arrest record
- your children (or plans for children), other family members
- details of military discharge

## Take Care of the Details

Once you land an interview, there are several steps you must take before meeting the person who may be your next boss. One of the most important is planning your appearance. Like it or not, employers make judgments based on appearance. Ask yourself: “Do I look like the right person for this job?”

☐ **DRESS** conservatively, but try to dress one step above what you think employees there wear to work every day. Go easy on the cologne and jewelry. Be noticed for your business-like appearance and good judgment.

☐ **GROOMING** and hygiene are required. Even the nicest clothes won't hide poor habits. Take a bath or shower. Brush your teeth. Polish your shoes. If you wear glasses, make sure they are clean. This shows you pay attention to detail.

☐ **PRESENT YOURSELF** with confidence, but don't be boastful. Try to relax, but don't be casual. Be natural and positive. Use proper grammar. Organize your thoughts before you speak and address questions directly.

☐ **BE HONEST**, sincere and courteous. Remember, no matter how much you want or need a job, be honest about what you can do. If you think finding a job is tough now, try doing it with a reputation for dishonesty.

## It's OK to Discuss Salary

There is an art to discussing salary. You should have an idea of what you need to meet your monthly expenses. Try to avoid being cornered into stating what your minimum salary requirement is. If you are pressured to do so, ask some questions first. Will there be any travel or relocation expense? Will there be any special purchases?

Before you go into the interview, sit down with your budget and establish the minimum salary on which you could live. Then set that minimum 10 percent higher. This gives you a little room to negotiate without putting yourself in financial difficulty.

It's probably best to steer clear of questions about vacation or other benefits during the first interview unless the employer brings it up.

## Organize Your Thoughts

### An Interview Checklist

If you think of the interview as having four distinct scenes or parts, you can get an idea of what to expect next.

### The Introduction

Work on:

- ☐ Warm greetings
- ☐ Establish rapport
- ☐ Maintain eye contact
- ☐ Try to relax

### The Background

Focus on:

- ☐ Past work experience
- ☐ Interests
- ☐ Skills
- ☐ Values

### The Goals and Objectives

Talk about:

- ☐ How you can help the employer  
(This is the heart of the interview)
- ☐ Listen carefully to what is being asked
- ☐ Think about your answers carefully
- ☐ Answer the questions honestly
- ☐ Don't ramble or repeat yourself

### The Closing

Find out:

- ☐ Where things will go next
- ☐ If they call you or should you call them
- ☐ If they need additional information or references

# How to Accept a Job

Say “Yes.”

Remember, before committing, this is your last chance to ask any questions or negotiate any details not previously covered in the interview process.

# And if You Didn’t Get It?

Hang in there!

A lot of people take themselves out of the job market. They believe they have nothing to offer because they haven’t worked for a while, or they don’t have the qualifications or connections for a modern job. Maybe they think they aren’t attractive enough or are too old.

It’s easy to talk yourself out of sending one more resume or making another phone call. No one likes to be turned down, but it is normal and to be expected. Don’t let it bother you, and keep going.

Don’t discriminate against yourself. Regardless of your age or appearance, you do have something worthwhile to offer an employer. You just have to keep searching until you find the employer who has been searching for the right person for the job – YOU!

# Follow Through for Success

Never underestimate the power of a thank you letter after an interview. Not only is it important to demonstrate that you are polite, considerate and have good ethics, it is another opportunity to “speak” to the person who can give you the job you seek.

Write it immediately after you leave the interview and mail it that night.

Say thank you for the interview. Mention something that happened or was discussed to remind the interviewer of who you are. Don’t forget to suggest some follow-up action.

In the example, one of our resume candidates got an interview with a newspaper. Here’s what he wrote afterwards:

# Sample Thank You Letter

ROBERT J. LEE  
139 Excaliber Lane  
Hometown, IN 46003  
(219) 888-0000

Katherine P. Wright  
Managing Editor  
Anytown Bulletin-Journal  
4000 Manufacturer’s Way  
Anytown, IN 47000

March 19, (Year)

Dear Ms. Wright:

Thank you for making time in your busy schedule today to see me and show me around your newsroom. It was particularly exciting to see your news desk in action on deadline as they coped so professionally with the breaking story about the judge’s resignation.

I came away with a strong vision of how I could enhance your reporting team’s energetic pursuit of news in the community interest. As we discussed, I am excited about the possibility of extending your newspaper’s coverage of the local Native American community through features and photos.

I have enclosed the series of articles and the photos you requested. I look forward to hearing your reactions to them.

Thank you again for meeting with me today.

Sincerely,

*Robert J. Lee*  
Robert J. Lee

Enclosures

## After the Interview, Then What?

If the interview went well, you probably will be called back for additional interviews with others in the company. (If it didn't, you may not hear from them again. No one likes to bear bad news, so don't be surprised if they call only the final candidates.)

Whatever the outcome, use each interview as a learning experience. Answer all questions on the following Post-Interview Worksheet and keep it as a record. Who knows, maybe they'll call months from now when an even better position opens.

### Post-Interview Worksheet

Interview with (name)\_\_\_\_\_

Date, time, place\_\_\_\_\_

I was ☐ on time (at least 5 minutes early) ☐ late (how much?)\_\_\_\_\_

I wore\_\_\_\_\_

Receptionist's name\_\_\_\_\_

Names of anyone else I met\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Facts I learned about the company\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
about the job\_\_\_\_\_

about the people\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Questions I flubbed (& what I wish I'd said)\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Questions I handled well (& what I said)\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Other things worth remembering\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Getting Ahead

**“Thirty-seven percent of the people who ask for something, get it. One hundred percent of the people who don’t ask, don’t get what they want.”**

— *Richard Gaither; author, job search consultant*

There is no one, sure way to land a job. What works with one company may flop with another. Some employers conduct a very detailed series of interviews while others will hire strictly from a resume. Some employers are fair, some are not. Just remember, every step you take is moving you closer to a new job. The important thing is to keep going.

By following the suggestions in this workbook, you are closer than ever to your goal of a new job. But in the 21st century, no job is an end in itself. To get your NEXT job, you need to keep moving forward.

**There are as many as two million job openings every single day, every day of the year. The best of these jobs will go to those people who know how to get them. You might as well have one of them.**

## Lifelong Learning is the Rule

The Age of Information is here and change is moving at the speed of digital signals across the worldwide web. How can a hard worker keep up? By learning as much as you can every day.

Lifelong learning is a catch phrase for many related activities, including:

- continuing postsecondary education
- staying current by reading about the new developments in your chosen field
- trying new skills and activities
- connecting with community resources like the library and the schools

It’s a world of opportunities, a world that is exciting, draining and stressful all at once. So grab a ride sometime on the information superhighway, sign up for a distance learning class, become a student’s job mentor, and make the most of modern life.

## About Starting a Business

Each year new businesses are started in every city and town in Indiana. Whether this is the year for you to put your dream into action depends on many factors. The most important thing to remember is to look (research, budget and plan) before you leap.

If this is an idea that appeals to you, there are many books on the subject in your local library. Other possible resources include the nearest Chamber of Commerce, the Indiana Department of Commerce, and the U.S. Small Business Administration.

## Resources are Close at Hand

This is only a partial list of potential resources, but use the blank space at the bottom to add your own resources as you come across them.

### Indiana Department of Workforce Development, WorkOne Centers

Indiana has established area WorkOne Centers that can connect you with a variety of employment and training resources. For information on local offices and area centers, call the Indiana Department of Workforce Development Helpline,

**1-800-437-9136.**

### Learn More Resource Center

Information Hotline: **(800) 992-2076**

The Learn More Resource Center is Indiana's Pre-K to college connection to help Hoosiers learn about college in Indiana. It helps students prepare for college the show them the process of getting there. It also helps with student financial aid, Indiana career information and other essentials for lifelong success.

### U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training

Indiana State Office

Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse

46 East Ohio Street, Room 414

Indianapolis, IN 46204

Phone: **(317) 226-7001**

The Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training is the registration agency for federally approved apprenticeship programs. The agency can provide information on available apprenticeship programs and how to apply for them.

### U.S. Department of Labor

200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.

Washington, DC 20210

**866-4-USA-DOL**

The U.S. Department of Labor is the federal agency that coordinates job training programs and works in partnership with other federal agencies to strengthen workforce development. Among many studies and materials available through the department are various projections of occupations.

## Information is Waiting for You

As you gather information for your job search, start at the nearest Indiana WorkOne Center. You'll find many useful resources in the Information Resource Center Area – books, videos, computer databases and software. Personal computers are also available to help you prepare a resume, learn more about career requirements and identify potential employers.

## Bibliography

Another valuable resource for your job hunt is the public library. There are dozens of good books that you may find helpful with sample letters and resumes, or information on jobs, communities, employers and even selecting careers. The best keyword for a library search is "job hunting."

The following list of books is only a small sampling of what is available and is intended to help you locate the section of the library or bookstore where you will find additional titles. Several of the authors listed below have other books as well.

### ***ARCO Resumes That Get Jobs***

(MacMillan; New York)

ISBN # 0028622065

### ***The Quick Resume & Cover Letter Book,***

by J. Michael Farr (Jist Works, Inc.; Indianapolis, IN)

ISBN # 1-56370-634-2

### ***What Color Is Your Parachute: A Practical Manual For Job Hunters and Career Changers,***

by Richard Nelson Bolles (10 Speed Press; Berkeley, CA)

ISBN # 0-58008-541-5

### ***The Complete Idiot's Guide to Getting the Job You Want,***

by Marc Dorio (Alpha Books; a Simon & Schuster MacMillan Company)

ISBN # 0028627237

### ***The Best Jobs for the 21st Century,***

by Ronald L. Krannich, Ph.D. and Caryl Rae Krannich, Ph.D. (Impact Publications; Manassas Park, VA)

ISBN # 1-57023-091-9

### ***101 Great Answers to the Toughest Interview Questions,***

by Ron Fry (Career Press)

ISBN # 1-56414-464-X

## Notes & Contacts

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.